Dry Port in or around Delhi is presently under consideration.

Experiments on artificial rains

1453. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any success has since been achieved by Government in regard to artificial rains in the country;

(b) how many times it has been experimented in India and the places where experiments have been conducted during the last three years; and

(c) what is the future programme in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN): (a) The experiments conducted by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune during the years 1973, '74, '76, '79 and '82 showed an increase in rainfall on an average by about 26 per cent. The experiments conducted during 1980, '81 and '83 showed an average decrease by about 10 per cent. The cloud-seeding operations carried out by Tamil Nadu Government in 1983 indicated some increase in rainfall. The evidence avail able does not lead to a conclusive inference that success has been achieved.

(b) Three experiments have been conducted during the monsoon seasons of 1981 '82 and '83 in Sirur and Baramati regions of Maharashtra by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology. Tamil Nadu Government had also conducted cloud-seeding operations in 1983 during the summer monsoon season around Madras city.

(c) Future programmes have not been formulated.

Profits and losses earned/incurred by the Central public sector

1454. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the profit/loss account of the Central public sector undertakings (other than oil companies) in each of the last three years and so far during the current year; and

(b) the total investment made in these enterprises so far and the estimated investment required to be made to improve the performance of such undertakings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA): (a) The sector-wise profit/loss figures of public enterprises (given the profit/loss of oil companies separately) for the years 1982-83 and 1981-82 are available in page no. 26 Table 2.21 of the Public Enterprises Survey 1982-83 (Volume-I), placed on the Table of the House on 28.2.1984. Similar information for 1980-81 is available in Table 2.23 at page 23 of the Public Enterprises Survey 1981-82 (Volume-I) also placed on the Table of the House on 25.2.83. The profit and loss position of individual enterprises for these three years is also available in Volume-3 of Public Enterprises Survey 1982-83. The audited figures for 1983-84 are still under various stages of finalisation by the concerned enterprises.

(b) The investment as on 31.3.83 in these enterprises sector-wise is available at page 153 under para 4.1 of Volume-I of the Public Enterprises Survey 1982-83. As the performance of the public enterprises depend on a number of factors and not on investment alone, the question of assessing the investment required to be made to improve the performance of these enterprises does not arise. Additional investments as and required are considered by the Government depending on the merits of individual cases.

Expansion of container facility at the Inland Container Depot of Gauhati

1455. SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government contemplate to expand the contoiner facility at the Inland Container Depot of Gauhati;

(b) if so, what is the maximum container loads proposed; and

(c) whether Government have any proposal to extend container technology to all the ports or to expond it only at the existing container ports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR): (a) At present there is no Inland Container Depot functioning at Gauhati. It has been decided to set up an ICD at Amingaon (near Gauhati) and this work has been included in the Railway Budget (1984-85). Action has been initiated for providing the necessary infrastructure facilities in a phased manner.

(b) Railway are planning to provide facilities for transporting ISO containers in train-loads. This will however depend upon the quantum of traffic actually offered by trade.

(c) Container handling facilities at present are provided at Bombay, Madras, Cochin and Haldia. Provision of the facilities at Calcutta is planned.

Abolition of Luxury Tax, Etc. by States

1456. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI S. W. DHABE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Tourism has proposed to the States to sacrifice a share of their present revenue in the form of luxury tax, building tax, bar licence fee, etc.;

(b) if so, the reaction of the State Governments thereto?

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Central Government have proposed that the hotels be declared as an industry; and if so, what is the reaction of the State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN): (a) In the interest of promotion of tourism, the Government of Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal have been requested to consider the possibility of abolishing the taxes levied in these States on the earnings of hotels. Similarly the Government of Kerala have been requested to consider reducing Bar Licence fees and Building Taxes on hotels;

(b) Only the Government of Jammu & Kashmir have abolished the tax levied on the earnings of hotels. Government of Gujarat and the Government of Tamil Nadu have not found it possible to accede to this request. Other State Governments have not yet responded. The Government of Kerala have promised to consider the possibility of reducing the Bar Licence Fee. About reduction of Building Tax on hotels, there has been no response ;

(c) Yes, Sir. Only the Government of Orissa and the Government of out Bengal have so far declared hotels as industry.

Smuggling Activities at Sahar Airport Bombay

1457. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI S. W. DHABE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports regarding smuggling activities at Bombay's International Airport at Sahar, involving foreign nationals, Indian contacts and the conniving ground staff;

(b) whether it has also come to the notice of Government that the policeman posted there are also in league with the anti-social elements; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken by Government in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) and (b) Persons found involved in smuggling activities are strictly dealt with under the provisions of the law, irrespective of whether they are Indian nationals or foreign nationals. There have been a number of cases in which foreign nationals, Indian nationals and airlines staff have been found involved in smuggling activites at the